DEMOCRATIC
GERMAN REPORT
REC'D JUL 13 1960
Vol. IX NO. 12 June 10th 1960 Price: 15 Pf, 5c., 3d.

WILL HE TALK?

West German Leaders Fear Eichmann

By a Special Correspondent

West German cloak-and-dagger operatives have been ordered to silence top war criminal Karl Eichmann, now held in Israel, before he puts the finger on leading West German political figures, according to reports from usually reliable sources in Bonn.

According to these reports, State Secretary Hans Globke, who was closely connected with Karl Eichmann during the nazi campaign to exterminate Europe's Jews, went into conference with intelligence chief General Reinhardt Gehlen immediately after the news came in that the Israeli authorities were holding Eichmann. When it became clear that Israel was not likely to extradite Eichmann to West Germany, Gehlen ordered his operatives in the Near East to take every conceivable step to see to it that Eichmann never stands trial.

Karl Eichmann, who during the war headed Department IV 4b of the Reich Security Main Office, and who was directly responsible for the murder of many millions of Jews, threatened soon after his arrest that he would tell the truth about other men, today in responsible positions in West Germany, who had been personally implicated in the greatest pogrom in history. The Hamburg newspaper "Die Welt" reported on May 26th, three days after Eichmann's arrest had been announced: "He was very calm at first in the hope that he would receive help from the Federal Republic. After he found out that no such help would be forthcoming, he threatened to implicate top German personalities inside and outside the government."

Government circles in Bonn feared that if Eichmann could not be silenced in time he would not only give damning evidence about the war-time role of State Secretary Globke, but also that he would unmask the leading West Germans who had helped him to leave Germany undetected, and to live prosperously in emigration.

In the past few years Eichmann has been working in the Near East, first as an employee of Concordia Ltd., a daughter firm of Deutsche Erdoel, a big West German oil-company. A large part of the shares in Deutsche Erdoel are held by Hermann Abs, one of Adenauer's closest friends and advisers. No hard information was available as to whether Hermann Abs had known the identity of his Near East employee.

From 1958 until his arrest by the Israeli authorities Eichmann worked as one of the partners in "Kathar Import", which had its main office at 22 Rue George Haddat in Damascus, Syria. This firm was mainly active in the importation of arms and ammunition from West Germany. Many of the West German firms implicated in this business are stated to have known Eichmann's identity, and to have given him business with the specific intention of "keeping on the right side of the SS" in case of an open nazi return to power in West Germany.

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The man who had apparently had most to fear from Eichman was West German State Secretary Hans Globke, who worked in the nazi Ministry of the Interior throughout the entire Hitler period. During a large part of that time he headed the special section of the Ministry dealing with Jewish questions. In this capacity he cooperated closely with Eichmann, who headed the special SS department dealing with the same question.

Apart from his wartime connection with Eichmann, Globke is one of the persons mainly responsible for providing the pseudo-legal basis for marking the Jews off as a special class of persons worthy of destruction. In 1936, he was the co-author of the official nazi legal commentary to the Nuremberg Laws, which reduced all Jews in Germany to the status of second-rank citizens.

When Hans Globke came under fire from critics in March 1956, Chancellor Adenauer, whose right-hand-man he is, stated that he was confident that Globke could only have written the commentary to the Nuremberg Laws with the aim of weakening the effect of these laws. The West German Central Board of Jews immediately issued a statement saying:

"We are unaware that Jewish lives were saved as the result of

(cont. on next page)

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WILL EICHMANN TALK?

any sort of commentary to the Nuremberg Laws. We know, on the other hand, that these laws led to the criminal murder of six million men, women and children. A jurist who sank so low as to provide a pseudo-scientific commentary to barbaric injustice has violated the moral basis of human co-existence, and lost the right to participate in the noble service of justice."

In September 1938, when nazi measures against the Jews were being tightened, Dr Globke was personally responsible for the decision that all Jewish passports should be stamped with a big capital "J". This made it possible to identify Jews at a glance, and in the subsequent months made it easy for the nazis to organise their round-ups.

Two months later, in November 1938, Dr Globke was the German official who worked out and signed an agreement with the government of rump Czechoslovakia, left over after the Munich Pact, providing for the handing over to the Gestapo of German and Austrian anti-fascists who had sought asylum in Czechoslovakia.

During the war he drafted a memorandum proposing the integration in Greater Germany of the whole eastern third of France. This memorandum was produced in evidence at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials as Document No. RF 602.

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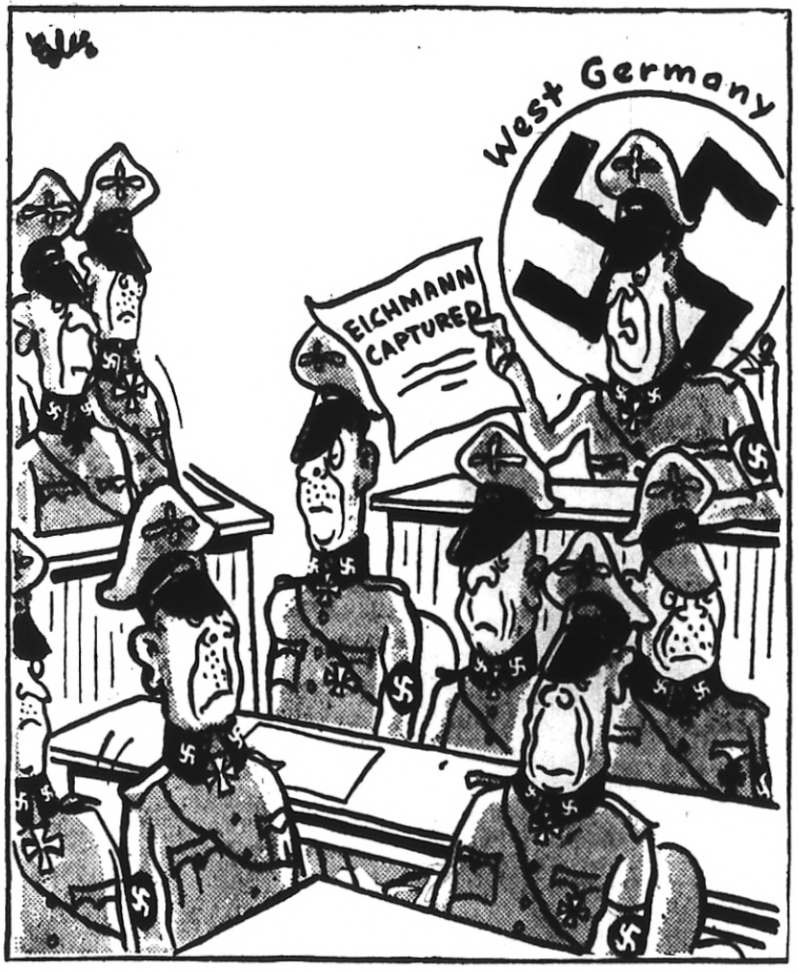
Commenting on May 30th on the arrest of Eichmann, the liberal West German newspaper "Frankfurter Rundschau" stated: "It was a curious coincidence that Eichmann's detention was reported on the same date that the West German Parliament was voting on a motion submitted by the Social Democrats proposing the extension of the statute of limitations in the case of National Socialist crimes of violence. The Federal Government and the Christian Democrats rejected this motion, stating that German justice had done everything possible to bring to account those who had committed crimes during the Third Reich. The cases of Eichmann and Professor Heyde should really have modified this self-satisfaction somewhat."

Even newspapers which usually support Chancellor Adenauer's Christian Democratic Party took the occasion of Eichmann's arrest to criticise the anti-Semitic record of some leading figures. The "Rheinische Merkur" stated on June 2nd:

"If the Federal Republic wants to survive, with a decent reputation, the belated arrest of Eichmann . . . then it will have to deal with the role of those intellectual proponents of the 'final solution of the Jewish question' who today occupy leading positions in offices, parties and the press just as if nothing had happened . . . We should like to name, as particularly bad specimens, Ventzki and Goldschmidt, officials of the Ministry for Refugees. Ventzki, who was Nazi Lord Mayor of Lodz (occupied Poland), was responsible for the Lodz ghetto, whose 270,000 inhabitants were liquidated, with the exception of a few hundred, and who is today an official in the (West) Berlin branch of the Refugee Ministry. Goldschmidt, former deputy Fuehrer of the Nazi 'Folk Group' in Hungary, was responsible for years, in the same ministry, for all non-German refugees from eastern Europe."

WHAT GLOBKE WOULD LIKE



"Er . . . this fellow ought to be tried by us!"

"Daily Worker", London

GDR PROTESTS FRONTIER BREACHES

"West Germany Bears Full Responsibility"

Frontier violations must cease, the Government of Democratic Germany stated in a note to West Germany on June 3rd. The note detailed recent incidents on the border between the two German states. It stated:

"Provocatory actions carried out or encouraged by members and even whole units of the Federal Border Patrol have become more and more frequent recently on the frontiers of the German Democratic Republic. The numerous encroachments onto the territory of the German Democratic Republic could have very serious results ...

"The Government of the GDR notes with regret that despite clear and unambiguous warnings, the number of such inroads has not decreased. On the contrary, many new cases of damage to border installations on the territory of the GDR have occurred; in some cases, fires have been set in the hopes of destroying these installations. In other cases, members of the German Border Police have been fired upon.

"We must emphasise that the provocations have been openly aided by officers and soldiers of the Federal Border Patrol, which is responsible to Herr Schroeder, Federal Interior Minister. Not only were civilians supported in carrying out these border provocations or even in crossing over onto GDR territory, but members of the Federal Border Patrol themselves took part in numerous incursions directed against the GDR border authorities.

"Here are just a few examples from amongst the large number of border provocations:

"... On April 4th 1960, on West German territory, directly on the demarcation line near Dankmarshausen, Eisenach District, a fire was set which destroyed frontier installations of the German police and caused material damage on the territory of the GDR.

"... On April 5th 1960, a troop transport lorry of the Federal Border Patrol drove up to the border at Rimbach near Muehlhausen, coming from the direction of Wendershausen. Several members of the Federal Border Patrol got out, destroyed border installations of the German Border Police and carried off border demarcation posts to West German territory ...

"On May 1st 1960 in the frontier area of Metzlar/Darmbach five West German citizens fired shots onto the territory of the GDR.

"On May 8th in the frontier area of Schnellmanshausen in Eisenach District, two West Germans tried to destroy border installations of the German Democratic Republic — they accompanied this with the singing of fascist songs.

"On May 13th, near Posseck in Oelsnitz District, three civilians crossed the border and tried to provoke members of the German Border Police by throwing stones. They were covered the whole time by a Federal Border Patrol vehicle with mounted machine gun and by a radio car, both camouflaged in an adjacent quarry.

"The Government of the GDR ... stresses once again that it is only due to the calm behaviour of the German Border Police members that there have been up till now no greater incidents or even border conflicts with serious results.

"... The Government of the Federal Republic has done nothing ... to prevent these border violations. Instead, it has openly supported those taking part in the provocations. This behaviour must be looked upon as conscious continuation of a policy designed to hinder a democratic and peaceful development in Germany and to widen even more the frontier between the two German states. It is not the demarcation posts which are to blame for the tension in Germany, but rather the forces which have divided Germany and prevented a peaceful and democratic solution of the German question.

"The Government of the GDR stresses again in all earnestness that the Government of the Federal Republic bears full responsibility for the results of any further provocations of this kind."

W. German Rents Rocket

Rents will go up steeply soon in West Germany, it was decided by the West German Parliament on May 24th. The complicated new law provides for step by step removal of all rent control protection.

1. On August 1st, the rent for 5 million flats will go up a straight 15%. Since the flats affected are all those built before June 1948, this increase will hit poorer families especially hard.

2. The next step will be to raise certain categories from this same group of buildings an additional 20% (based on the new rate). About 1¼ million flats will thus be hit by a second rent increase. Many newer flats will also be affected at this stage.

3. After another year, the other categories — older flats with medium rents and one-family and two-family houses — will become 25% more expensive.

4. By January 1st 1963, all price controls on pre-1948 flats will be dropped — the rent amounts will be left up to the landlords. A consolation offer of temporary loans in the worst hardship cases has been made, but this will be based on a number of conditions relating to income, etc.

5. By January 1st 1966 all protections in regard to rent in the whole of West Germany will cease altogether.

An in-expensive flat which cost 50 marks (about £4) in West Germany in 1948 now costs 76 marks (about £6). After August this year, according to the new law, it will rise to 88 marks (about £7) and after August 1962 it will climb to 105 marks (about £9). In 1963 its rent will depend completely on what the landlord demands.

A flat which cost 50 marks in rent in Democratic Germany in 1948 still costs 50 marks today. No rent increases are scheduled. The difference between rent scales in the two parts of Germany is even clearer when new flats are compared. In more extreme cases, West German flats may cost more than 4 times as much as flats of the same size in the GDR.

Photography Cheaper

A new price cut in Democratic Germany slashed prices on high-quality cameras and on fur coats on May 30th. Price reductions for cameras, including cine cameras, averaged 30%. Prices for fur coats were also cut by nearly one-third.

Adenauer Son Promoted

Chaplain Paul Adenauer, a son of the West German Chancellor, was named by the Vatican to the post of Privy Chamberlain of the Pope at the end of May.

Whither the Social Democrats?

In the second half of May, leaders of West Germany's Social Democratic Party made considerable efforts to re-align the foreign policy of their party, and to reach agreement on a "common foreign policy" with Chancellor Adenauer's Christian Democrats.

Here are comments on this development from two German newspapers, firstly "Neues Deutschland", central organ of the Socialist Unity Party, published in East Berlin, and secondly "Der Spiegel", independent West German newsmagazine published in Hamburg, West Germany.

"... It is no accident that just at the moment when the Pentagon and Adenauer had succeeded in wrecking the summit conference, right-wing Social Democratic leaders Wehner, Knoeringen, Erler and Brandt suddenly demanded a joint foreign policy of the SPD (Social Democrats) and the CDU (Christian Democrats). They have not let a single day go by during the past two weeks without proclaiming this new strategy ...

"While the right-wing SPD leaders were publicly supporting the 'policy of strength' politicians, Norwegian Social Democrats and the government which they control were protesting strongly against the use of their country for American espionage flights, Japanese Social Democrats were storming Kishi's government and uniting their efforts with the Communists to oppose the fateful treaty with the USA, and leading members of the British Labour Party were criticising Eisenhower's risky policies.

"But the right-wing leaders of West German Social Democracy were doing nothing remotely resembling this. On the contrary, they were praising those who had wrecked the summit conference and declaring their solidarity with them. Using the slogan of 'an honest re-assessment', SPD leader Wehner called for a joint foreign policy with the CDU, and von Knoeringen (another SPD leader) said: 'We have been knocking on the CDU's door for a long time. We are prepared to talk over all details of policy if that will help us to reach an agreement.' Helmut Schmidt (Hamburg), speaking at a district convention of the SPD for the Hamburg-Northwestern area, endorsed the NATO without any reservations and called for an 'adequate contribution by West Germany' (to NATO). A 'realistic evaluation amongst the members of the Social Democratic Party is also necessary' in regards to the question of 'military requirements', he said.

"SPD Press Secretary Barsig also declared officially ... that since there was no alternative to Adenauer's policy of opposing any relaxation of tension, it was necessary to work together with the CDU. When a journalist asked him whether the SPD were ready to meet CDU demands and vote for the military budget, he said: 'No subject is barred from our common re-assessment' ...

"The right-wing SPD leaders have sunk lower and lower. When they pushed through their new party platform in Godesberg a half year ago, we called it a programme of surrender. This analysis has proved to be only too true. They have abandoned everything which resembled an independent position. Now they are unable to find any alternative to Adenauer's policies. This at a time when people all over the world have found the alternative — in South Korea, Japan and Turkey they are busy chasing their Adenauers to the devil.

"The right-wing SPD leaders have thrown the 'Germany Plan of the SPD' completely overboard — a plan which did still contain some realistic features. Adenauer had demanded this step, and they met his demands only too willingly. The Chancellor does not at all like the idea that two German states are in existence, for example — he demands that the GDR be attacked, and the 'Germany Plan of the SPD' was not adapted to this idea. Adenauer insisted that Wehner, Erler and their fellows drop the proposal for peaceful reunification contained in the 'Germany Plan of the SPD' and they obliged."

"Neues Deutschland", Berlin June 2nd 1960

"After a variety-packed decade as Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer is faced by an unprecedented task: that of shaking West Germany's Social Democrats from his coat-tails.

"Amazingly enough, the members of the opposition party have decided upon just this new strategy; they hope that by hanging on to his coattails they can glide more successfully through history; their attempts at solo flights always ended with disaster.

"This new Socialist strategy of climbing onto the back of the Christian Democratic Chancellor's foreign policy cart and calling that a 'joint foreign policy' is based on two points:

"1. The sober realisation that because of Western failures and Eastern actions, the old SPD plan for solving the German question in isolation from other questions has become impossible.

"2. The election tactic aimed at convincing voters dissatisfied with the Christian Democrats on domestic questions but who do not trust the SPD in foreign policy issues that if the Social Democrats could form the government they would back up NATO security and maintain close connections with the West.

"Willy Brandt, the fighter from the Eastern Front of Berlin, is predestined to be the candidate for the position of Chancellor according to this highly-altered 'class struggle' tactic ...

"None other than the SPD's left end man Herbert Wehner, always a sworn enemy of Chancellor Adenauer ... has now taken over the job of pushing through this new course and plugging the candidacy of Brandt ... The summit collapse in Paris came as an unexpected opportunity for him ...

"As Herbert Wehner had foreseen, the reaction of the SPD members of Parliament after the summit collapse was by no means uniform, and was certainly not in conformance with his plans ... But a non-comrade saw through Wehner's motives before most of the SPD had understood them: Chancellor Konrad Adenauer ... confessed to close associates: 'I have never had any doubts about my foreign policy before, but now that the SPD is in favour of it, I shall have to think it over once again."

"Der Spiegel", Hamburg, June 1st 1960

Time for Realism

Britain should recognise East Germany. She already recognises China.

The United States recognises neither.

There is no reason at all to suppose that, by recognising East Germany, we should separate ourselves from the United States. Our recognition of China — a far more important country — did not have this effect.

It is high time that a realistic view was obtained in these matters.

After all, East Germany is a nation.

If it was set up as a result of a war, the same criticism could be made of many other nations in the world.

"Daily Express", London, May 31st 1960

Schleswig-Holstein — Nazi Eldorado

TOP PEOPLE SHIELDED KILLER

Legal manoeuvres by officials in West Germany have postponed indefinitely investigation into the question of who protected nazi euthanasia-killer Dr Werner Heyde.

Top-ranking members of Chancellor Adenauer's Christian Democratic Union were suspected of helping Heyde get a well-paid court job in Schleswig-Holstein province and of shielding him in the years before he was finally exposed and arrested in November 1959.

In order to protect these leading politicians, believed to include Kai-Uwe von Hassel, Christian Democrat Prime Minister of Schleswig-Holstein, charges have now been brought against two lower-rank officials. Any further investigations, it is claimed, would prejudice the court trials and will have to wait until these trials are completed. The situation at present is that first Dr Heyde must be tried, and all possible appeals heard: only then will these two men — a Social Court President and the provincial Health Board head — be tried. And only after their trials are concluded can there be investigation of further charges against the CDU leaders in the background; by that time the elections of 1961 and 1962 will be over and the men responsible will have every possibility to cover their tracks.

Dr Heyde, who had first been a major leader in Hitler's policy of killing thousands of mental disease patients and had then used the same methods against Jews and political prisoners in Dachau and Buchenwald concentration camps, had escaped trial shortly after the war by jumping from an American jeep. He went underground in Schleswig-Holstein province, which has always been notorious as an El Dorado for nazi bigwigs under cover or, more recently, for those making a come-back.

Under the name of Dr Sawade, he was soon helped into a high-paying job making medical judgments in pension cases for the Social Court in his new home at Flensburg, near the Danish border. On November 9th 1959 the public prosecutor's office was tipped off about the real identity of Dr Sawade, but before they could arrest him he had fled. He turned himself in a short time later after chances of leaving West Germany faded.

It soon became apparent that he had not only been warned, but that many key people were involved deeply in the case. The Swiss newspaper "Die Tat" wrote on December 12th 1959: "Among Heyde's protectors were the President of the Provincial Social Court, Buresch, and the Prime Minister of Schleswig-Holstein, Kai-Uwe von Hassel; here is the key to the whole affair: Heyde could obviously only hide behind his incognito so long because he could be sure that nazi crimes were looked upon as mere 'gentlemen's offences' in the circles in which he traveled."

(For background material on the case of Dr Heyde alias Dr Sawade, see GERMAN REPORT of March 4th 1960.)

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SS Man Praises W. Germany

Ex-General Kurt Meyer, ("Panzer Meyer") who commanded the "Hitler Youth" SS Tank Division in World War II and was sentenced to death by a Canadian military tribunal, said at a meeting of 1000 ex-members of the "Waffen SS" in West Germany on May 22nd that the SS veterans "would continue to fight for the the things for which our dead have fallen."

The meeting took place in Itzehoe in Schleswig-Holstein, not far from Hamburg, and was sponsored by the HIAG ("Mutual Aid Association of Former SS Members"), official agent of the West German Government for settling pension and back-pay claims of the men who were responsible for the worst crimes of the Hitler period.

The official support for the meeting was underscored by the presence of uniformed representatives of the West German armed forces, and members of the West German parliament. Kai-Uwe von Hassel, Prime Minister of Schleswig-Holstein province and a top leader in Konrad Adenauer's Christian Democratic party, sent a telegram of greetings.

Ex-General Meyer, who made the keynote speech, announced: "We pledge our support to the Federal Republic, because it is our fatherland and we know that some day it will again become a united, great Germany and from it a free Europe will develop." Meyer once commanded SS troops at Rotterdam and Dunkirk, then in Greece and the Soviet Union and finally against the second front landings on the Normandy coast. His death sentence was the result of his orders to murder Canadian prisoners of war, but he was released in 1954.

Other guests at the SS meeting were Sepp Dietrich and Theodor Wisch, once commanders of the "Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler" SS unit. Dietrich had also once been condemned to death.

The Christian Democratic provincial government had officially licenced the SS meeting in Itzehoe.

No Pictures By Request

Two West German cameramen who tried to photograph the SS rally in Itzehoe for Democratic Germany's newsreel company were beaten up by SS goon squads just outside the meeting hall. Although the two men both had valid West German press passes, nearby police refused to step in and protect them. One of the two photographers, Arthur Killus, was choked to the point of unconsciousness by the ex-SS men. They were thus prevented from getting film material on the rally.

A cameraman from Democratic Germany who had succeeded recently in photographing a similar rally in Malente, a town also situated in Schleswig-Holstein, has since been jailed in West Germany.

Courts Help Criminals

By a Legal Correspondent

The West German Courts, largely staffed by former nazi judges, many of whom were themselves implicated in war crimes, are coming out more and more openly on the side of the nazi war criminals.

The West German Federal Social Court, for instance, ruled on May 25th that the guards at nazi concentration camps were just doing their duty as soldiers, and thus they and their dependents have full pension rights.

West German war pension legislation originally made some distinction between regular soldiers, who were entitled to full pensions, and certain units, such as concentration camp guards, which were not automatically entitled to pensions. The latest court decision rehabilitated the concentration camp guards, and put them on the same footing as ordinary soldiers.

The case arose in this way: a widow had applied to the West German courts for the award of a widow's pension, claiming that her husband had fallen as a soldier. The lower courts had rejected the claim on the grounds that her husband had not been killed at the front but had been posted "missing believed killed" while working as a concentration camp guard under the authority of the black-uniformed SS. The Federal Social Court reversed this verdict, and ruled that concentration camp guards had just been doing their duty as soldiers, and therefore had full pension rights.

Court decisions in previous cases had granted big pensions to many high-ranking SS officers by approving their claims that their rank in the SS (ruled at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials to be a criminal organisation) was only assimilated rank, and that they had been, in fact, only nice peaceful ordinary nazi policemen and soldiers. The latest decision of the Federal Social Court opens the way for a flood of pension claims from former concentration camp guards who were lucky enough to escape death sentences from Allied Courts in the first post-war years.

The West German courts are now being asked to give a ruling on another point of law which may make any further war crimes trials in West Germany almost impossible. This legal loophole arises from the complicated muddle of documents, treaties, letters, unilateral pledges and so on (generally known as the Paris Treaties), which nominally ended western allied sovereignty in West Germany, and gave the German militarists the green light to go ahead with the raising of the new West German Wehrmacht.

This muddle of documents, which came into force in May 1955, is a lawyer's paradise, consisting as it does largely of amendments of amendments of clauses originally intended to deal with a completely different situation. The complicated nature of the documents is shown by the fact that the West German lawyers have only just unearthed Article 3 (3) (b) of the "Convention on the Settlement of Matters arising out of the War and Occupation", originally signed in Bonn on May 26th 1952, amended in Paris on October 23rd 1954, and finally promulgated on May 6th 1955.

This paragraph states in part:

". . . German courts may exercise such jurisdiction as they have under German law in respect of . . . criminal proceedings against natural persons, unless investigation of the alleged offence was finally completed by the prosecuting authorities of the Power or Powers concerned . . ."

The original aim of this paragraph was apparently to prevent the West German courts from re-opening cases against war criminals who had been sentenced by the allied courts and then discharging them without a stain on their character. But the lawyers engaged by many hundreds of Gestapo men, SS officers, and so on, against whom war crimes charges are now pending in West Germany, interpret it in quite a different way. They say that the allies investigated all war crimes: that they finally closed the investigations: and that the West German courts have no further right to take any proceedings in this connection, whatever new evidence may in the meantime have come to light.

And since the courts which will have to decide upon the question are themselves largely staffed by old nazis, it would not be too surprising if they ruled that this paragraph, originally intended to ensure that war criminals served their sentences, in fact means that war criminals may no longer be punished.

This newly-discovered loophole is the second line of defence of the war criminals still untried in West Germany. A large proportion of them have already been freed from the threat of trial by the refusal of the West German authorities to make any change in the statute of limitations, which provides that new charges of manslaughter cannot be preferred later than fifteen years after the offence. Since fifteen years have now passed since the end of World War Two, and since the West German legal authorities almost always prefer charges of manslaughter, and not of murder, against war criminals, this means that most war criminals not hitherto charged will go scot free. The new loophole is expected to be used in the many hundreds of cases in which charges had been prefered before the statute of limitations went into effect, but where long-drawn-out court procedure, and lawyer's delaying tactics have prevented the cases from yet coming to court.

When the Paris Agreements were promulgated on May 6th 1955, West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer announced: "This is a historic day which will be a source of joy and satisfaction to all Germans." It is beginning to look as though it was certainly a source of joy to all war criminals."

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Concert in a Factory

By Mary Wolfard

Socialism of course means much more than the basic job of putting the factories, mines and banks under the control of the people. One of the other things it means is getting people interested in the cultural side of life, in going to the theatre, the ballet, opera and concerts.

The audiences in the non-socialist countries are by and large middle class and many of these people, with their superior education in such things, bring to the theatre or concert hall the necessary background for at least a partial appreciation of what goes on. But socialists want everybody to have the opportunity to enjoy a full cultural life and so we have to find new ways of presenting plays, music and so on so that working people don't feel shy about coming and understand what it's all about.

A number of factory workers in the GDR have recently been asking for concerts with an introduction in sufficiently straightforward language so that they may learn to appreciate good music. This has been done already with quite an amount of success. Recently I went to a concert at the giant Agfa Wolfen works where this method was taken a step further — the concert ended up with the audience discussing with Paul Dessau, the composer of one of the works, what they had heard.

When Dessau, who by the way, is one of the top composers of the GDR, came on to the stage at the factory's own theatre he was holding a document. He explained that he had just signed an agreement to become what I think we can best call a cultural sponsor of one of the production teams in the factory. This means that Dessau will regularly meet with these workers and talk to them about various cultural events, will answer their questions, suggest plays they should see, go along with them to operas and concerts and so on. He said they aim to make Wolfen a real cultural centre. And this is really something, for Wolfen is only a rather small provincial town about two hour's drive from Berlin.

He introduced the first work, the Beethoven Kreutzer Sonata, very simply, saying who Kreutzer was, why Beethoven had dedicated this work to him, something about Beethoven's times and his inspiration from the folk music of the environs of Vienna where Beethoven lived.

After the interval Dessau introduced his own "Hymn to the Beginning of a New Era for Mankind". This is a short work which was written in honour of the tenth anniversary of the founding of the GDR and is a setting to works by Johannes R. Becher, leading German poet and GDR Minister of Culture until his death in 1958. It tells of the frightful wars of the past to which we have put an end as we have to hunger and poverty, of our plans and how we have already set foot in the age of Communism.

Dessau said that in composing this music his aim was to keep the political clarity of the original words. He discarded the usual large orchestra and makes telling use of a small number of wind and string instruments and drums as well as the choir and a speaker. The work is not easy to understand but I for one found it most moving. As it lasts only for 7 or 8 minutes, the conductor (Herbert Kegel of Leipzig) played it twice to give the audience a chance to grasp its more difficult passages.

After the performance, those of the audience interested adjourned to a smaller room for discussion and over glasses of beer and cups of tea and coffee some twenty workers from the factory got up and had their say. Of course I can only give you the flavour of what was said and not attempt to deal with all the contributions. I think the best received comments came from a worker in the chemical section who said that to people who work hard all week, music was essential for relaxation and regeneration. "I am proud that you have come to us, Comrade Dessau" he said. "You are a member of our party and I have been a communist for forty years. This work is in new musical terms, and in it you come with us and fight with us to build up socialism. This is what I found in our music.

"I am thankful and grateful that I came today. If we hear more of such music, we will understand better what we are fighting for and how to fight better. It is not always easy to build socialism."

Dessau was visibly moved by such a tribute and came over to shake hands warmly with this vigorous worker.

Another worker who came from one of the well-known production teams in this factory said that they had already heard Dessau's "Lilo Hermann". This is a very moving work about the first woman to be killed by the nazis for her political beliefs. "As a musical piece it is difficult but beautiful," he said. "So is the piece we heard today. But it speaks to us in our own language, in the language of the workers."

Several other workers spoke in this vein but others found that the end didn't express sufficiently clearly what communism would mean. A woman worker, for example, said that she understood the first two parts. She understood the dissonances in the parts dealing with the past, but she would have liked to have seen a different treatment of the section dealing with our reconstruction.

Another worker was shocked at Dessau's treatment of the poem and still another complained that the work was not entertaining. This caused quite an uproar with everyone wanting to answer at once. The upshot of the replies was that to understand any work of art, any piece of music, one must study, study and study again.

Iron Curtain Cheesecake?

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Bergmannstrasse 46
Dresden A 19
German Democratic Republic

GUEST NOTEBOOK

By Phyllis Rosner

The first time I saw Renate Simon was in Vienna at the World Youth Festival where she was attending as a member of the German Democratic Republic's delegation. She was gay, alert and full of self-confidence, this slender young woman.

From time to time since then we have run into each other, but never long enough for me to hear the story of her life. A few days ago I decided I must find out more about her for she seemed to me to embody the new Germany.

Renate was eight years old when war ended. She is like thousands of others of her age, and yet she is different from many 23-year olds, perhaps because she seems to have the wisdom of a person many years older. Her life is a tribute to her own strength of character and to the state in which she lives.

She recounts her experiences and answers questions without a trace of embarrassment. She has an infectious laugh and expressive grey-blue eyes. Although she is slender, she is wiry and it is hard to imagine the privations she endured.

Fifteen years ago, when the war ended, Renate was a small, puny child, clinging to her 63-year old grandmother. "We were trying to get to Saxony, had been doing so for weeks," she explained. "I shall never forget the attack on Dresden, in February, when the flames lit up the sky for miles around; I was terrified, but 'Oma' comforted me."

On the day General Keitel signed Nazi Germany's unconditional surrender in Berlin, Renate was living in a cold, dark, unheated air-raid cellar with her grandmother in Rosswein, a small town between Dresden and Chemnitz (now Karl-Marx-Stadt). Her mother had died five years before, her father was somewhere in Russia.

All that this small refugee possessed was packed in a small rucksack. Renate and her grandmother were totally dependent on the help of others. An old woman took pity on them, gave them a roof over their heads, but was so poor she could do nothing else for them.

Hunger, she explained, was nothing new to her. For a long time she and her grandmother lived on potato-stubble and scrapings. In summer she went to school bare-footed in order to save shoe-leather; then her grandmother was granted a tiny pension, which helped matters a little.

Five years later — May 8th 1950 — things had changed considerably. The German Democratic Republic was six months old. There were things in the shops, though they were extremely expensive. The old woman in whose house she and her grandmother were living was ailing. Her grandmother, now 68 years old, had to look after the entire household. They were still so needy that often she used to gather nettles so that they could all have a 'meal'.

When she left school, she was offered a job in a shoe firm as a quilting apprentice. She wanted to take on other, unskilled work, so that she could earn more money, but her grandmother urged her to learn a trade. "I'm so glad that I listened to her advice," she told me, "even though I only earned 50 marks a month and we could not buy much with that."

By the time she was sixteen Renate had fully qualified and was already a forewoman, one of the youngest ever. She worked as deputy head of a department employing 100 women in a shoe factory in the Erzgebirge Mountains. She earned 450 marks a month and lived in a furnished room. Her free time she spent at Rosswein with her grandmother, whom she could now afford to support.

"How did the women treat you? Didn't they take it amiss to have such a young forewoman," I asked. With a laugh, she said, "It was rather difficult at first. But I made up my mind on the very first day I would have to make it clear that, although I was so young, I knew my job. I think I succeeded."

Now Renate is forewoman in the Goldpunkt factory, East Berlin, where elegant women's shoes are produced. She is a People's Chamber deputy and she is getting married later this year.

Her fiancé is 25 years old and is safety inspector at the same factory. He is studying in the evenings to qualify as an engineer. They see each other as often as possible, but her duties as a deputy often take her away from Berlin.

"Theoretically and even in practice he is a firm supporter of equality of the sexes, but he takes rather a dim view of my having to be away often at the weekends," she said.

I asked her how she became a People's Chamber deputy. It happened this way: In 1958 when elections were held, Renate was a Free German Youth organisation official in her factory. "We had an excellent group; we really got things done in the factory in Magdeburg where I was then working and where I got to know my fiancé."

The Magdeburg Free German Youth organisation decided to propose Renate as a People's Chamber candidate. (The East German Parliament has, in addition to the groups of the five main political parties, fractions of the main organisations in the country). "I was completely taken aback when this was suggested to me," she explained. "I told them I couldn't possibly accept. However, eventually I was convinced I ought at least to try. Thinking back on my life, I must say the argument used 'your abilities will develop with your tasks' played an important role in governing my decision."

Then came, as she put it, some of the most strenuous weeks of her life. The GDR electoral law stipulates that candidates must present themselves to their constituents, answer questions and take instructions on what problems they must raise if elected. During the day Renate was doing a full job, in the evenings she was chasing about in villages and towns in the Magdeburg district, addressing election meetings.

In autumn 1958 she was elected, when she was 21 years old. She is not the youngest People's Chamber deputy, but among the youngest. This position involves many duties; she has to report regularly to her constituents and hold consultation hours so they can raise their problems with her.

Life for Renate is rather arduous but, as she told me, extremely interesting. Now she is earning over 600 marks a month. She lives in a furnished room right near her work.

She and her fiancé have joined a building co-operative; in two years they will be the owners of a small house, centrally-heated, with two large and two small rooms, bathroom, kitchen etc. In order completely to own their future home they will have to pay 2,400 marks in monthly instalments and, in addition, have to put in a certain number of hours helping to build their house.

When the house is ready Renate hopes to have a little more spare time which she intends to use to study and qualify further in her trade. She has much time before her, her whole life practically, and she is to spend it in a socialist country where there will certainly be neither unemployment nor economic crises.

Edited and published fortnightly by John Peet. Democratic German Report, Friedrichstrasse 167/III, Berlin W 8, Telephone 22 29 68. Printed in Germany by (204). Veröffentlicht unter Lizenz-Nr. 694 beim Presseamt des Ministerpräsidenten der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik.